REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the Office Action dated April 13, 2006 and the references cited therein. Applicants provide this response in a sincere effort to place the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the application, claims 1-12 are presented for consideration.

In the Office Action, claims 1-7, and 9-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,169,338 to Stoll ("Stoll"). The Office Action contends that Stoll teaches a pneumatic arrangement comprising a plurality of servicing modules for the preparation of compressed air which are arranged on a common bus. The Office Action also asserts that a control module is connected with the bus system for monitoring functions for the service modules and there is a valve arrangement in connection with the common bus system. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1 and 12 in view of the cited reference.

Claims 1 and 12 each define a pneumatic arrangement comprising a plurality of servicing modules for the preparation of compressed air arranged in a common bus system. A valve arrangement, including a plurality of valves, is connected with the common bus

system. The control module controls and monitors the plurality of valves in the valve arrangement.

In the present invention, the valve arrangement, which includes a plurality of valves, are valves used to control actuators and/or other devices in a pneumatic system. (Specification page 1, lines 10-15.) These valves are connected together on the same bus with the plurality of servicing modules. By including the valves of the valve arrangement on the same bus as the air preparation units, electrical connections and pneumatic connections may be made through the use of integrated connectors, thereby eliminating extensive wire or tubing runs. Therefore, the present invention provides a compact design which facilitates assembly and maintenance of a pneumatic system.

In contrast, the cited Stoll reference does not teach or suggest the use of a valve arrangement including a plurality of valves located on the same bus as the air servicing modules. The Office Action refers to Stoll switch 20, which is a shut-off valve that interrupts the flow of air to the servicing unit. Accordingly, if one wants to interrupt the flow of air to the entire servicing unit, valve 20 may be actuated.

A single shut-off valve is not the same as a valve arrangement including a plurality of valves as defined in claims 1 and 12. The shut-off valve of Stoll is employed to interrupt air to the entire system including the service unit. There is no teaching in Stoll to include a plurality of shut-off valves since only one such valve would be needed. Furthermore, there is

no teaching in Stoll to include on the air servicing unit valves that would control actuators, i.e., a valve arrangement including a plurality of valves.

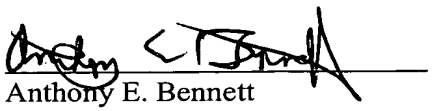
The valves of the valve arrangement in the present invention serve a very different purpose than the shut-off valve of the cited reference. In the present invention, the valve arrangement supplies actuators and other pneumatic components in a manner controlled by the control module. The valves may be switched independently of each other to affect the operation of a machine or system. The valves of the valve arrangement are not a single shut-off valve controlling the flow of air to the plurality of servicing modules. These valves are defined in claims 1 and 12 as being connected with the common bus system which includes a plurality of servicing modules. Such a pneumatic arrangement is neither taught nor suggested by the cited art.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 12, and those claims depending therefrom, patentably distinguish over the references of record.

As a result of the amendments and remarks set forth above, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of claims 1-12, and allowance of the application with claims 1-12.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would be helpful in moving this case towards allowance, he is respectfully invited to contact the Applicants' attorney at the number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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